 VERMONT DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Family Services Policy Manual		161
Chapter:	Juvenile Justice	
Subject:	Juvenile Justice Philosophy and Operating Principles	Page 1 of 3
Approved:	Frederick M. Ober, Division Director	Effective: 9/3/99 FINAL
Supersedes:	Casework Procedure 1302	Dated: 1/10/95

Purpose

To provide a philosophical basis for our work with youth in custody and on probation for reasons of delinquency.

Policy

An effective juvenile justice system is balanced and restorative in its focus on:

- protection of the community from delinquency;
- juveniles taking responsibility for their delinquent acts; and,
- equipping juvenile offenders with the skills they need to live productively and responsibly in the community.


We will include families and community members as team members to:

- plan for juvenile offenders; and
- share responsibility for the treatment and services for juvenile offenders.

To the extent that the safety of the public and the juvenile allow, plans for the juvenile should focus on the family and allow him or her to remain in his or her own community.

Juvenile probation supports the placement of the juvenile offender in the community. Court ordered conditions and supervision by the commissioner's designee assure that the needs of the juvenile, the victim and the community are addressed. Juvenile probation will be recommended for all delinquents regardless of custody status in order to:

- support the full range of community-based placement options for delinquents in custody, including placement home;
- assure that the benefits of a balanced approach to juvenile offenses is available to all delinquents; and,
- facilitate the juvenile offender's reintegration to the community from restrictive placement.

 VERMONT DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Family Services Policy Manual		<h1>161</h1>
Chapter:	Juvenile Justice	
Subject:	Juvenile Justice Philosophy and Operating Principles	Page 2 of 3
Approved:	Frederick M. Ober, Division Director	Effective: 9/3/99 FINAL
Supersedes:	Casework Procedure 1302	Dated: 1/10/95

For delinquents whose needs or the risk to public safety cannot be addressed in their families, placement outside the home may be necessary. In this case, a transfer of custody to the commissioner will be necessary.

PROGRAM GOALS:


The goals of the division's Juvenile Justice Program are to:

Develop responsibility and competency in juvenile offenders;

- Juveniles will take responsibility for delinquent acts by writing letters of apology, providing community service, restitution, or other appropriate action.
- Juveniles will feel the satisfaction of making amends for their actions and successfully completing the conditions of probation ordered by the court.
- A juvenile will participate in services -- therapeutic, educational and vocational-- that enhance self-esteem through opportunities for success.

Treat each juvenile as an individual;

- Delinquent behaviors are evaluated in the context of their unique circumstances.
 - A juvenile's needs are assessed both in context of his or her strengths and of familial and environmental setting.
- Protect the community with planning based on the seriousness of offense(s) and an assessment of the risk of further offense;
 - Treat parents as partners in the supervision of their children and in the effort toward a successful completion of juvenile probation;
 - Services are made available to the family to assist them in responsibly fulfilling this role;
 - The juvenile's parents are included as a member of the youth's treatment team.
 - Provide services and supervision, to the greatest extent possible, in the home, school, and community;
 - Promote successful completion of probation in the home and/or community by providing intensive and flexible programming and supervision, and incremental responses and consequences.

 VERMONT DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Family Services Policy Manual		161
Chapter:	Juvenile Justice	
Subject:	Juvenile Justice Philosophy and Operating Principles	Page 3 of 3
Approved:	Frederick M. Ober, Division Director	Effective: 9/3/99 FINAL
Supersedes:	Casework Procedure 1302	Dated: 1/10/95

- Place juvenile offenders out of home only when public safety or juvenile's safety dictates. Such placement is regarded as a temporary option employed until treatment or rehabilitation allows for successful reintegration to home or community;
- Promote partnership with service providers, state agencies, and community organizations.